



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL GRADUATES ITS 116<sup>TH</sup> RECRUIT CLASS**

*~ Fifty-two new troopers are ready to hit the streets ~*

**TALLAHASSEE** – The 116<sup>th</sup> Basic Recruit Class of the Florida Highway Patrol graduated today at the Tallahassee Community College Auditorium. The ceremony took place at 10 a.m. as family and friends gathered to celebrate the significant accomplishment.

The class began on June 15 this year as strangers from around the country gathered at the Florida Highway Patrol Academy in Havana, Fla., to become members of the 116<sup>th</sup> recruit class. They successfully met the demands of 27 weeks of rigorous training designed to challenge them academically and physically. Today they were awarded the badge of a trooper and were sworn in as the Florida Highway Patrol's newest members.

Lt. Governor Jeff Kottcamp spoke to FHP's newest troopers at the ceremony and congratulated them on their achievement.

"Florida's Highway Patrol is a vital component to keeping our state's 18 million residents and 80 million visitors safe," said Lt. Governor Kottkamp. "Today's graduates have chosen one of the highest callings, a career of public service. We are very fortunate to have fine men and women who choose to perform such an important job that requires courage and patience, as well as sacrifices by their families, on a daily basis."

Training included topics such as self defense, firearms, traffic law and crash investigation. Recruits had to experience the effects of pepper spray and demonstrate the ability to fight after being exposed. They learned how to safely operate a vehicle in adverse conditions. The classroom and hands-on instruction arms recruits with the skills, abilities and knowledge they need to serve and protect residents and visitors in the Sunshine State.

"We are very proud of the men and women who are taking the oath of office today," said Col. John Czernis, director of the Florida Highway Patrol. "These men and women will be sent to work across our state to serve the residents and visitors of Florida by making our highways safer."

Four members of the graduating class have family ties to FHP. David Karasek, Jr. is the son of Lt. Sonja Karasek and retired Capt. David Karasek, Sr. Mark Castleberry is the son of Lt. Ron Castleberry and the brother of Trooper John Castleberry. Candice Wilson is the daughter of Trooper Michelle Wilson. Trooper Lauren Miller's father, Thomas Fraclose, decided to join his daughter on the Patrol and is also graduating today.

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FHP GRADUATION (*Continued*)

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The Florida Highway Patrol congratulates the 116<sup>th</sup> recruit class. FHP is very proud of its newest members. Photographs of the recruit class along with details of their training are available online at <http://www.flhsmv.gov/fhp/academy/ClassActs/Class116/>. To learn about how to become a member of the Florida Highway Patrol and career opportunities, visit <http://beatrooper.com/>.

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